

Submitter: Mark Scantlebury

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5543

As a longtime Oregon resident (47 years), I know how precious water is throughout our state for wildlife, agriculture and recreation. For this reason, I support all efforts, including this bill, to fund the Oregon Water Resources Department so it can use data, science and staff to intelligently provide the state with guidelines and regulations enabling science and data-driven water management.

To this end, I recommend the Joint Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee does the following.

- Maintain OWRD's Current Service Levels — Maintaining current service levels is of paramount importance. With climate change and increasing competition for scarce water resources it is of the utmost importance that OWRD have adequate staff to manage our water. Please support full funding of current service levels.
- Reject Package 090 Reductions Related to Data and Services — Water data is the cornerstone of responsible water management. Please reject proposed cuts to OWRD's water data toolkit.
- Support Two Package 090 Additions — Grant the Governor's request for additional funds for (1) a one-time investment of \$100,000 for IT for a water use tracking and reporting system, and (2) a one-time investment of \$4.36 million to assist the Department with legal cost to work through important cases.
- Support Funds to Modernize OWRD's IT — There is a real need for mundane but important information technology work. This work is critically important to the public and the agency alike. Funding IT work should be a priority for the state, including:
  - Package 107, Strategic Modernization of IT Systems and Tools: Updating IT will help agency staff, water right holders, and the public. It will also make the agency more efficient and data more accessible.
  - Package 111, Improving Accessibility of Agency Website: This package would ensure that the OWRD website is up to date with information desired by the public, and ensure transparency and accessibility.

I hope you will take all the above in consideration and support OWRD's important work now and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Mark Scantlebury

Former president of the Lower Columbia Canoe Club (2004-2019)